

THE CHANGING ATTITUDE  
OF THE NEGRO

by

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Slow Through the Dark.

Slow moves the pageant of a climbing race;  
Their footsteps drag far, far below the height,  
And, unprevailing by their utmost might,  
Seems faltering downward from each won place.  
No strange, swift-sprung exception we; we trace  
A devious way through dim, uncertain light--  
Our hope, through the long-vistaed years, a sight  
Of that our Captain's soul sees face to face.  
Who, faithless, faltering that the road is steep,  
Now raiseth up his drear insistent cry?  
Who stoppeth here to spend a while in sleep,  
Or curses that the storm obscures the sky?  
Heed not the darkness round you, dull and deep;  
The clouds grow thickest when the summit's high.

Paul Lawrence Dunbar.

## Introduction.

The times in which we live hold for the future both a promise and a threat. All over the world we see unrest and upheaval such as have hitherto preceded great revolutions..

In the past, war and pestilence have shifted the center of civilization several times. Each in their turn, the countries at the head of the Persian Gulf, Egypt, and Southern Europe have held sway; and for a thousand years, western Europe has been unchallenged in its supremacy in the world. But war has been destroying the products of its civilization in these centers, where for centuries the progress of human society has been best organized. As a result, Europe's civilization has collapsed, and America finds itself, by virtue of this latest shift, the promised land of humanity. "Uncle Sam" has been annointed the high priest of the world, and ordained as God's champion of human rights. Is he prepared for such a high calling? To justify himself, he must meet many problems, and in his solution of them, he must interpret and demonstrate the meaning of democracy.

Perhaps one of the greatest of these problems is the changing attitude of the American Negro. In order that it may be understood, I shall trace the change as it has gradually come about, resulting from the interaction of many basic causes.

## Part I.

With a continent before them to conquer, our fathers could not be particular in their choice of labor; and for the ample reason that even most unintelligent labor, under proper direction was profitable, the African slave trader appeared. Economic pressure triumphed over humanitarian scruples and continued for over two centuries to pour a stream of African barbarism into Caucasian society. The barbaric and slavish condition of the African Negroes under the absolute and brutal sway of their chiefs is well known to all with any knowledge of their history. It is almost impossible to conceive of a people in greater degradation than the Africans in their own country, living as they were in helpless debasement, the chattels of their chiefs, to be used as passion, caprice or cupidity dictated<sup>1</sup>.

The emigration to the United States was not only a relief but a positive blessing to them. It was a transition from servitude, intellectual darkness and moral degradation to an environment of assured protection and comparative freedom; over to a condition of labor, it is true, but one which carried with it its virtues as well as its evils. It elevated

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<sup>1</sup>. Publication of American Economic Association, Vol. III. p. 102.

him from barbarism to a degree of civilization and usefulness and happiness which he never would have reached thru any other instrumentality in such a short time<sup>1</sup>.

The negro stock landed in America was physically superior to the average of that left in Africa--due to the drastic method of selection. But this selection led to a physical improvement alone; for at every stage in the shifting process, the criteria of selection were those of physique. Mental and moral qualities were not taken into account and those persons of bold and able characteristics were most likely to escape capture, for in Africa, those who had initiative and energy were likely to become the hunters rather than the hunted.<sup>2</sup>

In America the race came under other selective forces, both artificial and natural. The slaves were property absolutely ruled by the will of their masters. Then the masters largely controlled the relations of the sexes, with a view more or less deliberate, to securing rapid improvement of the race. They encouraged or demanded marriage or union with selected partners, and discouraged or prohibited union contrary to the interests of heredity.<sup>3</sup>

The internal slave trade of the nineteenth century led to another kind of selection. The incorrigible, indolent,

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1. De Bow, R. Vol. 25, p. 45.

2. The Am. Slave Trade: Spear, J. R. N. Y. 1900, Ch. VI, pp. 68-81.

3. Olmstead: A Journey thru the Seaboard Slave States, N. Y. 1857, pp. 55-57.

unruly, or criminal negroes would be selected and shipped far south, placed under gang systems of heavy labor on immense plantations and quickly broken of their unsatisfactory habits, or else soon eliminated. This tended to eliminate the bad characters. Thus, irrespective of the white man's efforts, this kind of selection tended to diminish the savage and increase the orderly elements of the African race nature<sup>1</sup>.

There were two kinds of amalgamation in connection with the American negro. The one was always illegitimate, did not affect the entire mass, and was of doubtful benefit, the crossing of white and black. The other was legitimate, universal and probably beneficial, that which resulted from the intermingling on our soil of many tribal strains of blood, originally distinct in Africa. In our negro population, as it came from Africa, were about thirty distinct tribes of different social and physical characteristics. On our shores, however, all faint ethnic differences were lost. The readiest means of distinguishing one from another--language, customs, and manners--disappeared, and interbreeding proceeded freely. At the close of the period of slavery, this amalgamation had brought about approximate homogeneity. The condition of slavery was peculiarly favorable to the other kind of amalgamation. Under the anti-bellum regime nearly every

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1. Paul Barringer: Address in Proceedings of Montgomery Conference, May, 1900.

household kept a superfluity of "house negroes", the number frequently exceeding the whites by half or more. Between the two groups existed an intimacy born of the peculiar relations that bound them together. Slaves could not shift their occupation at will, and many lived all their lives under the same master. Their children played with the white children, and all grew up together, having many ties of mutual sympathy, in which, on the one side there was always a matter-of-fact assumption of superiority, and on the other an equally matter-of-fact recognition of inferiority. In view of this intimacy, the sympathetic relations, and the temptations presented by the presence of a subject race, itself prompted by strong impulses scarcely controlled by a moral sense, it is clear why illicit relations come into being under slavery, became widespread and important in their results.<sup>1. 2.</sup>

We know that physical environment has a great influence on life of man. The physical features of Africa were planned on a large scale; the mountains were huge, rivers immense, plains boundless, and sun extremely hot; in fact, all the forces of nature were exerted with an intensity that resulted in two effects upon the mind. They stimulated the imagina-

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1. Olmstead, p. 403.

2. Fanny Kemble; Journal of a Residence on a Georgia Plantation, p. 194.

tion to run riot in extravagant and grotesque fancies; and discouraged any attempt to cope with these forces; thus the African was kept perpetually in fear as to his fate. Hence, the encouragement to superstition, the dominance of a degrading religion of fear, supremacy of priests and religious orders and total discouragement of scientific reasoning. Not only the physical environment, but the social as well, determined the survival of this temperament and these qualities of mind. The change to America was peculiarly favorable and its stimulating influence must have been immense. The climatic change from West Africa to Southern United States was undoubtedly beneficial to the negro. In his own land, sustained effort, mental or physical, was impossible, but here it positively existed during a large part of the year. The seasonal changes of natural background and associated activities, industrial and recreative, must have exerted a mild and helpful stimulus, particularly to the psychic life. Human energy bears a very direct relation to the quantity and quality of food. It is affected by matters of clothing, housing and sanitation. Finally, much depends on the maintenance of the body in good working order, free from disease, and on the proper care when disease is incurred<sup>1</sup>. The condition of the negro was changed radically

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<sup>1</sup>. 'De Bois' Review, Vol. XXIV, pp. 321-6.

in all of these points on his transplantation to this country; that these changes profoundly influenced the race there can be no doubt.

More rapid, at least in its superficial action, than any of the other influences was the personal influence and discipline of the white man. The social inheritance of ideas and habits, determined by ages of semisavage existence, gave way to, or rather combined with, a profoundly different inheritance derived originally from Northern Europe and slowly developed thru the social contact of different groups on American soil. The resulting compound was a curious and interesting one. American slavery was a vast school in which a master race drilled a servile one into civilized life. The polygamous African home was destroyed and in its place arose a new polygamy less guarded and less effective. However, due to their occupations and their intimate contact with the master class, the house servants and artisans had private homes and a real family life<sup>1,2</sup>. And it is this class that formed the leaders of the past, and the future leaders of the race will necessarily come from the class of negroes having institutions of homes. For no race can rise about its home unit. And it is to the credit of the negro race, that out

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1. V. V. Clayton; White and Black under Old Regime, pp. 38-9..

2. Tellinghast, S. A.: Negro in Africa and America, pp. 135-8..

of such a past, he is slowly and surely evolving the institutions of the family and the home. It has often been said that slavery destroyed every vestige of spontaneous movement among the negroes. But this is not true, for the vast power of the priest remained untouched by the plantation system, and he became the interpreter of the supernatural and the comforter for his people. From these beginnings arose the negro church, the first American negro institution. It was not a Christian Church, but a mere adaptation of fetish or "boodocism" Association with the whites and missionaries from the North gave these rites a veneer of Christianity and gradually the church became Christian and accepted the simple Christian creed, but retained many of its old customs. It is the fact that the negro church today is the sole surviving social institution of Africa that accounts for its extraordinary growth and vitality. In the negro church the new is linked with the old--and the old forms a permanent foundation upon which the new is built; this accounts for its influence during the past forty years, and the conservative attitude it is now taking on the race problem<sup>1</sup>.

In the economic field of slavery, the two factors of profit and control were fundamental in the system of slavery,

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<sup>1</sup>. The Negro, pp. 189.

yet they inevitably led to many defects and positive evils. In failing to proportion reward to effort, and offering little incentive to labor without fear, it was unfavorable to the inner development of character and prevented the negro's competency. Another grave industrial defect in slavery was the absence of any motive in the slave to economize in consumption or to handle tools with care. This fostered the heedless habits of the race and the proof of this statement can be found during the reconstruction period or today on most negro farms in the Black Belt of the South.

While slavery trained the negro to work, it taught him to connect all labor with the condition of slavery. It was inevitable that he should feel that labor was degrading, since he saw the slave owners keeping free from manual toil. The outcome was natural, that when he attained freedom, he turned his back on all manual labor. This aversion to work because it was a slave's part, and the firm belief that the national government planned to care for and feed the newly emancipated slave, sent thousands of them from the farms and plantations at the close of the war, to wander aimlessly about seeking a living, but unwilling to labor for the same. Little by little, the negro is overcoming this aversion, as their attitude towards industrial education proves.

In slavery the negro gained some general notion in regard to education. He learned that education was denied a slave and that people who were educated belonged to the master class and did not labor. Thus, he felt that education had nothing to do with labor and when he gained his freedom, he wanted education more than anything else. This accounts for the schools that grew up during reconstruction. The negro had a peculiar notion as to the kind of schools he needed; he felt that Greek and Latin would open the doors of opportunity to him, so his first efforts were along classical instead of industrial lines.

Up thru this American system the negro began to rise. He learned the English language; he began to be associated with the Christian church; he mingled his blood with the master class. The house servants were particularly favored, in some cases receiving education, and the number of free negroes gradually increased. For, as the negroes were educated, they gained a cleaner idea of freedom and were more willing to work and buy their own freedom. This movement was slow, but by the war, had affected many. Those who bought their freedom together with those freed by voluntary action of the masters, acted as an incentive to the others in bondage. It was in this educated class

that there was clear evidence of distinct self-assertion and advance before the war. Frederick Douglas made his first speech in 1841 and thereafter became one of the most prominent figures for abolition. National Conventions began to assemble and the delegates were drawn from the artisan and higher servants showing a great increase in efficiency among the rank and file of free negroes. The progress of the negro during slavery was greatest in those groups which were in closest contact with the civilizing influences of the white man. He needed the influence and example to follow, and this social situation was the chief factor in his elevation. It was this fact that caused the negro to be differentiated into five distinct classes at the close of slavery; field hands proper, artisan and factory hands, house servants, foremen and stewards on plantations and free independent negroes. Slavery demanded tremendous readjustments, and the negro was able to make them. However great the progress made, the distance to be covered before assimilation with civilization could be reached was greater and the war found a race far behind the whites in all competing powers.

The function of the southern slaves in facilitating the operations of the Confederacy during the Civil War, however, was potent. Altho an element of weakness when contrasted

with an equal number of whites, the negro population fulfilled an important office in governmental economy and by the performance of valuable agricultural, mechanical, and quasi-military labors, contributed essentially to the general support, aided in the public defense, and liberated, for active service in the fields, almost all the arms-bearing white inhabitants of the Confederate States. Southern slaves cannot be too highly commended for their fidelity, quiet behavior and patient labor during this eventful period. In localities not overrun or occupied by Federal forces they remained loyal to their owners. Few indeed, were the instances of insubordinations, and history of the times furnishes us no authentic example of violence or insurrections. While the strong men were in the tented fields, far removed from unprotected wives and children, their slaves remained quietly at home, tilling the soil, ministering to the wants of the household and performing all servile obligations with the same cheerfulness and alacrity as when surrounded by the usual controlling agencies. Domestic operations were conducted with accustomed regularity, security of person and property was not invaded; and the usual tokens of respect and obedience were exhibited<sup>1</sup>. The domestic peace which reigned in the South during the epoch of uncertainty and apprehension

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<sup>1</sup>. Mag. of Am. Hist.: Vol. 16, pp. 168.

is surely a unique record of the dependence, trust and attachment that the negro had for his master and family.

However faithful, unselfish and devoted the negro was during the War, there was in the minds of most a longing for freedom. Du Bois says: "Few men ever worshipped freedom with half such unquestioning faith as did the American negro for two centuries. To him as far as he thought and dreamed, slavery was indeed the sum of all villainies, the cause of all sorrow, the root of all prejudices. Emancipation was the key to a promised land<sup>1</sup>.

At last emancipation came, suddenly, fearfully like a dream, but the nation was not ready. The assumption was made after the liberation of the slaves, that if they were given constitutional rights, they would be insured against political evils. The ballot was given him, not so much to enable him to govern others, as to prevent others from misgoverning him. Thus the million or so of new voters were most of them ignorant in a sense of which illiteracy gives but a hint. They were unversed even in genuine family life; partly skilled in manual industry, unpracticed in citizenship, utterly untaught in the principles, the facts of history, the theory and art of self government, which make up

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<sup>1</sup>. Du Bois: The Souls of Black Folk, pp. 5-6

the proper equipment of the voter. A large part of them, the field hands on the large plantations, were rude and degraded, trained to live solely under close and constant control. Three courses were offered for the whites: To conciliate and educate the negro; to outvote him by white massing; and to suppress by force and fraud. However, the whites did none of these; they stood apart in wrath and scorn. Thus for some time after the war the influence of property and intelligence in the South was completely broken, and the negro vote was ostensibly supreme. The consequences were what might have been expected. For the blacks, the sudden opening of political power and preferment was of very doubtful benefit. It turned all their hopes and aspirations in the wrong way. To the more promising and ambitious it offered sudden and brilliant prizes, instead of patient apprenticeship which they needed.

In the negro mind there were but two parties; the one that freed him and the one that fought against his freedom. They understood that their freedom and right to vote was given them by the North, and to the North they turned. A horde of political adventurers, known as the carpet-baggers, from the North poured into the Southern states and, in con-

junction with the refuse of mean whites, they undertook the direction of the negro voters. Nothing could have happened that would have hurt the negro more, yet we must understand that the white Southerner must bear his part of the blame, for had he chosen, he could have been the leader, which was needed so urgently by the negro.

"Then followed under the direction of the northern troops, a grotesque parody of government. The State debts were profusely piled up. Legislation was openly put up for sale. The Bosses were in all their glory and were amply rewarded"<sup>1</sup>. Many negroes were undoubtedly venal, but more were ignorant and deceived. But the negro voters as a whole showed indubitable signs of a disposition to learn to better things. First, they strove for schools to abolish ignorance, and second, a large number of them revolted against the extravagance and stealing that marred the beginning of reconstruction and joined with the best elements to institute reforms. Even in the midst of all the difficulties of the period, the negro government accomplished some good. They instituted a public school system in a realm where public schools were not known. They opened the ballot box and jury

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<sup>1</sup>Merriam:: The Negro and the Nation, p. 137.

box to thousands of whites who had been debarred from them by a lack of material possessions, and they passed new social legislation. Du Bois says, "The great stigma on the whites is not that it opposed negro suffrage, but that, when it saw the reform movement growing, and a larger and larger number of black voters learning to vote for honesty and ability, it preferred a Reign of Terror to a campaign of education and disfranchisement of negroes instead of punishment for the guilty"<sup>1</sup>. The grievance most profoundly felt by the whites in this period was not the unwise laws, the waste of public money, or the oppressive taxes. It was the consciousness by the master class of political subjection to the servile class.

At length, the northern troops were withdrawn, and the whole scene changed. The carpet-baggers had had their day, and they returned laden with southern booty to their northern homes. The old official class being excluded, and the aloof policy prevailing in the political field, it was the more lawless element that first began to assert the white supremacy. There grew up an organization called "the Ku Klux Klan", designed at first partly as a rough sport and partly to overawe the negroes. There were midnight ridings in spectral

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<sup>1</sup>. Du Bois; The Negro, p. 217.

disguise, warnings, alarms, whippings, and even murders. The society or imitations of it spread over the entire South. It was at its height in 1868-70, and gradually gave way; due partly to the vigorous measures ordered from Washington, partly to the legitimate political combinations occupied by the whites, but mostly due to the fact that it had served its purpose in frightening the negro from the polls. So partly by violence, partly by fraud, but largely thru the force of old habits of obedience and command, the planters in a short time regained their ascendancy. Some times they did not even count the votes, generally they succeeded in dictating them, and by systematic manipulation or intimidation, they restored the South to quiet and some degree of prosperity.

The whites thrust the freedom, not only out of legislative majorities and state offices, but out of all effective exercise of the suffrage. The intelligent class massed against the ignorant found no serious difficulty. Most of the negroes were frightened from the polls; however, a considerable number still voted, but their party was put in a minority, and their power speedily disappeared. Negro suffrage was almost nullified, and that, too, before the legislation of the following decade.

This irregular and indirect suppression of the negro vote, which prevailed from the close of the reconstruction period, was not thoro and sure enough to satisfy the white politicians. And the lawless habits that it fostered alarmed the better classes. The movement for legal restriction of the negro vote became active in 1895 and accomplished its end by new constitutional amendments in six states. These amendments required qualifications which the negro could not meet. Some of the requirements were the following: Three hundred dollars worth of property; the payment of poll tax; the ability to read and write; the ability to explain any section of the Constitution; regular employment in some occupation; good character; and an understanding of duties and obligations of citizens. These restrictions apply in theory alike to both races. But exemption from them is allowed, and the suffrage is given to certain classes: To all who served in the Civil War; to all who were entitled to vote January 1, 1867; and to the sons of the persons included in the other classes. Thus the large class of negroes lost all suffrage, and gradually lost all interest in politics. Their vote had no standing and was never consulted and gradually the Afro-American became a negligible quantity in the political life of the nation. This political isolation existed

up until the World War in a general way and resulted in little or no political unrest among the rank and file of the race. Nowever, a few of the leaders of the race demanded political rights for the negro, but with the exception of a small party, they had no following.

Before emancipation, the negro had noted that, wherever the law had been invoked with reference to a negro, that it was generally to punish or to restrain. Thus, he came to view the law as something to be feared and evaded, but not necessarily to be respected or to be sought as a means of protection. Under freedom, the negro's experience with law was the same as under slavery. Stringent laws on vagrancy, guardianship and labor contracts were enacted and large discretion given judge and jury in cases of petty crime. As a result, negroes were systematically arrested on the slightest pretext and the labor convicts leased to private parties. This "convict lease system" still survives over wide areas in the South. And Du Bois says that it is not only responsible for the impression that the negro is a natural criminal, but also for the inability of the southern courts to perform their normal functions after so long a prostitution to ends far removed from justice<sup>1</sup>. As a result, law has been a thing

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<sup>1</sup>. Du Bois: The Negro, p. 222.

of terror to the negro, and the whites have made little effort to raise the negro about the fear of the law by basing their demands on natural suggestions.

During slavery the whites owned labor, land and subsistence, and hired the laborer and advanced him the subsistence. This resulted in such practices of cheating and high interests that the blacks became deeply dissatisfied and began to migrate to the cities where there was a demand for laborers. This led to a new code of laws passed by the states. These laws were very severe, but competition compelled the land owners to offer more inducements to the farm hands. The result was the rise of the black share tenant, the peasant farmer, and the small capitalist. The South feared that the Freedman was advancing too rapidly and made every effort to "keep the negro in his place". After excluding all negroes from suffrage, they added laws to humiliate and stigmatize negro blood; separate railroad cars, street cars, separation in schools and churches and the denial of redress to seduced colored women. All these laws meant not simply separation, but subordination, caste, humiliation, and injustice. To all this was added a series of labor laws making the exploitation of negro labor more secure. Negro schools were cut

off with small appropriation or none at all. All this was accomplished by an appeal to race prejudice. The lynching mob was egged on by invented tales of crime.

The reaction of the American negro was interesting. Naturally, they began to protest and appeal to courts. Then to their astonishment, there arose a colored leader, Booker T. Washington, who advised them to yield to disfranchisement and wait for greater economic strength and efficiency before demanding rights of American citizens. For a time the colored people hesitated, but after his address in Atlanta, he had the support of the mass of his race.

It was the work of Washington to put education on a sound and rational basis, and it was necessary to change the opinion of the masses of negro people in regard to education and labor. He made them see that education connected itself with the practical daily interests of life, that they must apply what they learned in school to the common and ordinary things of life, that education raised and dignified labor, and by means of labor the race could be lifted from the bottom. On the other hand, he proved to the South that education didn't spoil the negro, but made him a law abiding and useful citizen. Under his leadership, home life

was encouraged, industrial training developed and negro solidarity strengthened. Washington rendered his race great service in the emphasis he placed upon financial independence. "I think", he wrote in "Up From Slavery", "that the whole future of my race hinges on the question as to whether or not it can make itself of such indispensable value that the people in the town and the state where they reside will feel that our presence is necessary to the happiness and well being of the community".. It was because of this that he preached material prosperity. And this is the reason he lay such emphasis on industrial education. He did not deny the value of other forms of education, but he felt the mass of his people needed to learn some productive industry. Washington never talked of grievances; he always spoke of opportunities. There is no doubt that he felt the discriminations against the negro as keenly as any one, but it was characteristic of him to obliterate himself for the social good. This point is well shown by the following incident: Mr. Edgar Gardner Murphy, who gave the best years of his life to education and was an apostle of the highest ideal of the new South, was one night speaking in a private house in New York. Mr. Washington also spoke. At the end of the

formal talks, the host, a prominent New York financier, said, "We will now go to the dining room and continue our discussion". Mr. Washington knew that if the Southern man who had spoken went into the dining room with him, the former's influence in his own state would receive a great shock. He did not leave the white man to decide; he immediately excused himself and left.<sup>1</sup>

However, during this period the negro was segregated and shut unto himself in all social and semi-social relations of life. This isolation removed in a large measure the white race as an example, and fostered the old feeling of inferiority. For the very fact that as a people they did not protest against discrimination was an indication that they were inferior and were willing to tolerate such laws. Finally a certain class of negroes gradually came to see that the race could not gain economic strength and take its place as a modern race with its political power withheld and emancipated by caste. Thus began a movement for the fundamental rights of citizenship which resulted in the Niagara Movement in 1905. The launching of this movement marks a profound change in the history of the race. The "Crisis", the voice of this radical literary group, edited

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<sup>1</sup> Outlook: N. 20, 18 (120), 457. N. 24, 15 (111), 701.

by Du Bois, demands for the negro, the right to vote, civic equality and education of youth according to ability. The expressed object of this movement is the continual protest against all forms of discriminations. This group of men has been bitter in its denunciation of B. T. Washington, because he believed in conciliation and constructive work. They believe that Washington's doctrine has tended to make the whites, North and South, shift the burden of the negro problem to the negro's shoulders and stand aside as critical and rather pessimistic spectators. When, in fact, the burden belongs to the nation, and each individual is responsible for helping to right the wrong.<sup>1</sup> These men see little good in southern white man, and their writings convey a spirit of bitterness and hatred toward this group. The leaders of this movement realized the power of the black man, if the mass of the race did not. For when Roosevelt refused the admission of colored delegates to his convention and refused to insert the clause demanding the repeal of unfair discrimination laws, and the right to vote on the same terms with other citizens, concerning negroes in the Progressive platform, Du Bois says in the Crisis, "Now

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<sup>1</sup>•Du Bois: Soul of Black Folk, p. 58.

Mr. Black Voter, you with six hundred thousand ballots in your hand, you with the electoral vote of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and New York in your pocket, what are you going to do about it?" But there was little response, for the race as a whole was not organized and did not feel their power. Then also the influence of Washington was still strong and the negro was indifferent to politics. However, the challenge awakened a dormant desire and resulted in radical thought, if not action.

Due to the growing spirit of radicalism, which was resulting from the Niagara Movement, there arose a movement for better understanding of the negro. This movement was an outgrowth of the Sociological Congress held in 1912. It is called the Southern University Commission on the Negro, and is composed of men from every state university in the South, who are agreed as to the duty of the white race to secure justice and opportunity for the colored one. This commission was organized by Dr. J. H. Dillard of New Orleans, president and director of Anna T. Jeanes Fund. There are many other agencies in the South trying to find a method of helping the negro get a larger share of the fruits of his toil and enabling him to live his life more abundantly and

harmoniously with the Southern white man, but this organization is perhaps the most potent. It resulted in a systematic study of the negro, both races working together to get results that would be of value to humanity at large. The negro Church, clergy, lodges, clubs and business men worked hand in hand with the Commission, and much was accomplished. One of the International Y. M. C. A. Secretaries of the South, enrolled over ten thousand young College Southern students to study the white man's debt to the negro. Many of the groups ask for a further study of the subject, and other courses merely outlined and followed. Others have organized classes and the spirit of co-operation and friendliness that seemed to be developing was that to be the dawning of a new era. "No race can be understood when regarded as a detached and consequently anomalous, fragment, cut off from its wide human relations. Races are human first and racial afterwards. Differences are deep, and abide; but likenesses go deeper yet", says Hammond in her discussion of the foundation for this spirit of co-operation. The basis of co-operation is like-mindedness, or kindredness of ideas and ideals. The South is slowly beginning to realize that both races are trying to move in the

same direction and toward the same goal, and if either reaches the goal, it must help the other on the way. So not alone from a sense of service, but from a sense of protection as well, was this movement started; for the South realized that this was a big problem that demanded the largest knowledge, the sanest judgment, and the clearest thought. Dr. White of Atlanta, Georgia, a fearless exponent of "thinking white in the South", spoke before several thousand North and South negroes in Boston in 1915 and said: "The relation in the South between races has never been so happy as it is now. Never has the outlook been so prosperous. The people of the South are 'thinking white', that is, the leaders are giving expression to the best sentiments. The South is now looking upon its millions of negroes, not as a liability, but as an asset. The South is training the negro for success, for efficiency. The South sees that it is common sense to help the negro. When the negro owns something, then he is respected,-----

White people down South think that the negro is a man. They are saying this out loud. They are praying God to help them deal with the negro on the basis of humanity. They think that the negro is distinctively a Southern man. I

predict that the time will never come when three-fourths of the negroes of this country will not be found in the South. The civilization of the South, everything that makes it peculiar and characteristic, centers around the negro. Indeed, the negro has sweetened Southern life. Whole communities are shaped by the negro,-----

The race problem is to be solved, not by having a few Northerners with education and culture reach the top, but by having the well-trained negroes reach down and help up the ladder the black men and women who are below struggling".

Similar testimony was given by other Southern leaders and there was a marked spirit of co-operation. Both races were beginning to get each other's views, were recognizing the sincere efforts on either side to help solve the problem and were trying to learn from each other. Of course, conditions were far from ideal, but the spirit of co-operation was there and it was developing.

Among the many encouraging and inspiring utterances by both whites and blacks at one of the meetings of the Southern Sociological Congress, no single speech summed up the race situation as it was at the beginning of the World War as did that of a young negro on the closing night. "I

have always known", he said, "that the old Southern white man understood and trusted the old negro, and that the old negro understood and trusted the old Southern white man; but before this Congress I never dreamed that the young Southern man and the young negro could ever understand or trust one another; and now I know they can; and that shoulder to shoulder, each in his own place, they can work out together the good of their common country.<sup>1</sup>

Thus we see the Proclamation of Emancipation made an epoch and opened an era. As has been shown, it did not give the freedman equality of privilege; nor has it done so even now. There has been much suffering and injustice, and still is; but the little negro was right who said to General Howard, when asked what to tell the white world, "Tell them we are rising." "Worthily has thy race met the trust bestowed upon it. From contempt and amusement, we have passed to the pity, perplexity and fear of the whites, while in our own souls we have arisen from apathy and timid complaint to open protest and manly self-assertion", says Du Bois in his book, "The Negro".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>. Ann. of Am. Acad. of P. & S., Ser. 2, Vol. 49, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup>. The Negro: p. 231.

He sleeps in France's bosom,

The brave of yesterday;:

Who gave his life while fighting

To save Democracy.

H. D. Greene.

Part II.

Individualism in the sense of isolated endeavor is becoming less and less prevalent in America. The World War marked the end of individual endeavor and the beginning of cooperative endeavor in this country. The basis of cooperation is like-mindedness, or kindredness of ideas and ideals. Two races as well as two men cannot work harmoniously together unless they are sufficiently like-minded to be moving in the same direction and toward the same goal. Like-mindedness, kindredness of conception, and genuine confidence are therefore the essentials of co-operation. No group of men who do not believe in themselves and in one another can be expected to cooperate in bringing about large results. The first essential in the growth of race consciousness is that the members of the race shall be like-minded, shall come to realize their consciousness of like desires and needs; in other words, shall come into the realization of kind. It means that man shall come to see that they belong to a common race, have a common heritage and a common future. Nothing can take the place of this. This race consciousness growing into race pride becomes the most powerful factor in welding together, into cooperative and constructive action, all those who belong to the race. It

at once raises efficiency and increases determination, and these in turn tend to create a greater self-respect and self-confidence. Race pride, race consciousness, and race co-operation do not mean race segregation. A man is more of a world citizen because he is a good American, and likewise, a man is more thoroly sympathetic with humanity because he belongs to, works for, and is a genuine part of, one group of the human family. Therefore, when we talk about the growth of race pride and race consciousness on the part of the American negro, we do not mean that he will be less an American, but more a negro. He is more a negro that he may be more an American. He is not less interested in humanity because he finds himself interested in his own race, but the very fact of his race appreciation gives him a new consciousness of the dignity of all human kind. Of course, the interest must be rightly directed or there will grow up two democracies in one country. It was for this reason that Dr. Washington emphasized conciliation and co-operation. When Washington was young, his race was without race consciousness in the best sense; certainly, they were without race pride. Perhaps one of the best things Dr. Washington did for his people was to inspire a real pride and a real belief among

his people. For when all virtue was supposed to reside in another race, there could be no hope for the negro. But when he began to get sufficient culture and sufficient resources to find a larger life within his own race, there could be no doubt that he has a motive for progress.

It is, therefore, with the keenest interest that one looks everywhere for indications that this pride of race is growing, and one hails with delight anything that points to its fuller development. Perhaps at no time in the history of the race was this so prominent as the period preceding the World War. One of the clearest indications of this new appreciation of the race was the open avowal and championship of the race in its needs by the better type of negroes. Dr. Booker T. Washington has gone out of his way to assert over and over again his glory in his own race. Paul Lawrence Dunbar has done the race a real service thru his poems and stories showing a deep appreciation of the values of his own people. Another indication of this growing race pride is the manner in which the best negroes glory in their past. There was a time when the negro was ashamed of his slavery; there was a time when he was unwilling to talk of his relationship to Africa, and that the farther he

could get away from his past, the better off he would be. But the negro of this period was coming to appreciate the strength, the fidelity, the glory of his fathers, and he was clinging tenaciously to their traditions. Hampton and Tuskegee were teaching their students to glory in the history of their race. Not in its failures, but to be proud of the latent capacity bequeathed to the present generation which makes progress possible. The negro music was the soul of the old negro. Some of the best negro musicians were building up on the basis of these old melodies to make a music suited to the negro of this day. The growing collection of old manuscripts, books, pictures, etc., that bear on the history of the race is another indication of their growth. Likewise the growth of race pride is marked by the variety of business enterprises which are growing up in the South as well as in the North. The fact that the negroes have their own business houses and that they have confidence in them is of marked importance. For a few years ago, the negro had no confidence in the ability of one of his own race either in business or professional life. Of particular interest to the sociologist is the fact that negro children are now playing with negro dolls. In 1911 Dr. R. H. Boyd established a negro doll factory, where little negro dolls

true to life are made. The demand for these dolls is so great that the factory cannot supply all the orders. Perhaps the most encouraging sign was the pride which the negroes had in their own blood. Dr. Washington, Major R. R. Moton, George Carver, Dr. J. C. Price in the educational field, Isaiah Montgomery and Charles Banks in the business field, Phillis Wheatly, Paul Lawrence Dunbar and W. E. B. Du Bois in the literary field, Dr. C. T. Walker, Bishop George Clinton and M. C. B. Mason in the ministerial field ranked among the sanest and best leaders of the race. Each branch of these leaders had been called forth by needs that were pressing, and each contributed something to the social heredity of the colored man. Perhaps of the many factors that influenced the development of race consciousness, nothing was so marked in its effects as the national organizations of the race. In the educational field, The American Negro Academy, The National Association of Teachers in Colored Work, The Negro Society for Historical Research and the different Greek letter Fraternities had their influence. The organizations for economic advancement, especially the National Negro Business League, The Negro Insurance Association, The National Railway Employees' Protective Association, National Bar Association, National and Western Negro

Press Association and The National Medical Association have had a remarkable influence. The National Urban League for Social Service among Negroes, and the National Association for the advancement of colored people has resulted in a marked advancement of the negro. The national association of colored women, and the four national associations for political advancement gained many concessions from politics and inspired the race before and during the war to seek for rights formerly withheld from them.

The whites of the South and North as well, were beginning to recognize the race consciousness and race leadership among the negroes. There are marked signs of encouragement along all co-operative lines. In the Southern Sociological Congress report of 1911, the report reads, "Thoughtful white and colored leaders of the South discussed with rare frankness, sympathy and understanding, their common problems. The white newspapers carried the details of the section on Race Problems, and made favorable editorial comment on the South's new attitude toward negroes".<sup>1</sup>.

It was just at this time that America was drawn into the international conflict, and for a time, at least, all that was centered on the problems of the war and our own

<sup>1</sup>. 1911 S. Soc. Cong. Report.

domestic problems were forgotten.

As soon as the United States entered the World War and began plans for mobilizing an overseas army, the problem of using the negro as a soldier became prominent. There were those who advocated that the negro should not be used at all; that he be excluded from the draft or if drafted, that he be mobilized for work only. When in April, 1917, the universal service bill was before Congress, the opposition of some of the Southern congressmen to this bill was expressed as follows: "We of the South cannot stand for inclusion of negroes in the universal service plan. It would bring down upon the districts where the negroes far exceed the whites in number a danger far greater than any foreign foe." In August, 1917, the War Department announced that: "The rule of the regular army in the matter of the training of the colored troops as separate organizations will be adhered to. They will not be called last, but they will be called separately. All colored men called in a state which has a cantonment in it will be organized and trained there."<sup>1</sup> The South protested against the war department's policy, and the Northern press supported the

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<sup>1</sup> Negro Year Book: 1918-19, p. 79.

government policy. In the latter part of August, 1917, a group of men interested in the negro questions, by invitation, held a conference with the Secretary of War. The negro leaders present at the conference promised to cooperate to eliminate as far as possible the danger of race riots near concentration camps. No special objection was raised against negro troops being sent to Northern camps, since this would probably lessen the danger of race friction. The general objection raised was to different training or treatment of negro soldiers from that given white soldiers.

Some people wondered if the negro leaders, especially the Niagara group, would unconsciously or wilfully encourage their people to assume an indifferent, if not a hostile attitude toward the country. As a matter of fact, without advice or council from any organized body, official or otherwise, the educated negroes showed themselves loyal and patriotic, and counseled their people to be loyal. The negro responded to the country's call and immediately volunteered his services. He tried to get into the navy, but found all doors closed to him except positions of menial service. He turned from the navy to the army and entered all departments opened to him. No class of people responded more promptly

to the draft than did the negro, and his regiments were soon filled. Soon after our entrance into the World War, there arose a considerable discussion as to the advisability of the use of negro officers. There were some who urged that the negro soldiers would not fight well under negro officers. At first, they intended to train the negro under white officers, but due to the example of the Spanish American War, where there were a few colored officers over negro troops in the regular army, and perhaps even more to the intense opposition aroused among the educated class, especially the literary group, and still more to the evidence of growing race confidence and pride, it was decided that negro officers be largely used and that a special camp be established at Des Moines, Iowa.<sup>1</sup> Here more than 626 of the 1250 educated negroes who completed their course of training were commissioned as officers in the United States army. These officers were placed over negro troops and for the first time in American history, a negro division was under negro officers. Dr. Du Bois, in his speech at Lawrence, said that this change of policy on the part of the government was due

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<sup>1</sup>. Negro Year Book, p. 87.

to the fear of the government of the force and organization backing the negro leaders. He cited the case of the West Indies to prove this. There is supposed to be no race problem in the island, neither is there any organization among the negroes. Yet there was not a single colored officer in the army.

More than eighty-three thousand negroes were drafted and sent overseas to fight for the United States. The race, while clearly conscious of what it considered its rights, was most earnest and persistent in its efforts to be granted a chance to do its duty to its country. What they did was made manifest by citation after citation, the conferring by the French government of many war crosses, and the granting of many United States medals for distinguished bravery. The negro soldiers of the United States arrived late on the battle field, but in sufficient time to make Germany feel the strength of their arm. Like the Senegalese forces of the French army, the black American troops held their own on European battle fields and stood the test of courage, endurance and aggressiveness in moments of greatest stress. Whether performing individual exploits, fighting in a single regiment, or doing battle in a division made up entirely

of his organization, the negro soldier rose to every test<sup>1</sup>. The entire first battalion of 367th Infantry, the "Buffaloes", as it was called, was awarded the Croix de Guerre for heroism in the drive on Metz. This was their first battle and they fought and won what trained veterans had failed to win. Three different Black Regiments won the Croix de Guerre, which gives each man in the regiment the right to wear the cross. So the negro soldier, alike of Africa and America, played his part in the great war. Along the north-east front, in Rheims, on the Marne, at Mont de Choisy, in the Argonne, before Metz, these held their ground and broke the enemy lines by their unconquerable tenacity.<sup>2.3.</sup> Of much interest to the white was the attitude of the black soldier. He did not enter the army for adventure, but left home for patriotism. He fought for his country, regardless of the fact that he knew there was no true democracy as far as he was concerned. His one answer to the question of why are you in the army, was always the same, "Because my country needs me", regardless of the way it was expressed.

There has been much said about the patriotism and ser-

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<sup>1</sup>. Negro Year Book, 1918-19: p. 99.

<sup>2</sup>. Negro Year Book, 1918-19: p. 99.

<sup>3</sup>. Cur. Hist: Dec. 19, p. 536.

vice of the negro as a soldier. It is equally true that the negro has supported the war as a citizen and as a contributor to relief funds and subscriber to loans.

No threats, scares, or other means of intimidation were used to make him pledge or buy, either, in keeping with or beyond his ability. On the other hand, wherever the negro has been informed as to his duty as a patriotic American citizen, regardless of other calls, he has responded most liberally and cheerfully. It has been a noticable fact that he responded most readily to the patriotic appeal, investment had little influence, but the plea that the United States needed him was always responded to. But the real explanation of the negro's co-operation and success in the war lies in the fact that he had been recognized as an American citizen and given responsibilities the same as white men. The negro at home has been made to realize the opportunities that have come to him thru the call of the government, and, like the colored soldier, at the front, he responded in a spirit of service and sacrifice that marked him as a worthy patriot.

Negro conscription frightened the South. The withdrawal of a considerable fraction of the supply of farm labor was

embarrassing just when the pull of the North upon the negro labor was intensified by the drying up of the flow of immigration from Europe. But what chiefly disturbed the South was the probable effect upon the negro population of the return of the men who served in the war. Would the negro be the same kind of man when he was mustered out, as when he went in? Would he accept the facts of white supremacy with the same spirit as before? Or would he require a new sense of independence that would make of him a fermenter of unrest among his people?

The South was right in its beliefs that war would affect the habits of mind and behavior of men who engaged in it. We know that the Russian peasant came out of the war a totally different man than he was as he went into service. And the political, industrial and social unrest of the world today, proves that the South was correct.<sup>1</sup>

The war had a marvelous effect upon the negro soldiers. They were called out by their country, trained as American soldiers in the same camps with the whites and sent overseas to fight for democracy. They knew that America was expecting much of them and they responded nobly. Perhaps the soldier:

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<sup>1</sup>. New. Rep: Oct. 20, 1917.

first came into a meaning of democracy after his arrival in France. Here he found no discriminations made against him, except in a few cases where he was in contact with American white troops. The negro colonial troops of France were treated with the same respect as were native Frenchmen. So the American negro entered an environment in which he was looked upon as a man, not as an inferior being. Slowly he began to formulate a new philosophy; a philosophy in which he played the man's part. Because of the interdependence of the people, racial valuations tended to become equalized and social valuations took on new significance. Aside from this new feeling of equality that grew up in France, due to the particular social situation, and the natural lack of prejudice that one finds in European countries, there were other forces that aroused the negro's hopes and developed his new spirit. The brilliant record of his fighting gave him courage. He realized his strength and his power. Then his contact with other groups of his mother race and their powerful aid to their countries gave him an idea of race force, an idea of the federation of all dark people, which resulted in definite action in June of this year.

In America there were forces that aided in this change.

As is always true during periods of crises and stress, people are apt to be carried away by patriotism and ideals and ideas are expressed that are much in advance of the time. So it was in America that the negro soldier was praised as never before. Public speakers aroused the hopes and aspirations of the negroes by their large-sounding phrases. Many promises were given that could not be kept. Mr. Sam Gompers of the American Federation of Labor, speaking before a mass meeting of colored workers said, "What will come out of the war for labor? In a word, emancipation from every vestige of wrong and injustice". And Secretary Daniels, a Southerner, saying, "We have done more for democracy in six months than in six weeks of peace time. Our soldiers who come back from France will be men. Too long has America been enslaved, too long has caste been enthroned". Secretary Baker also gave the colored man encouragement when he said, "Democracy is a hope under which nations will do justice to nations and men to men".<sup>1</sup> Colonel James, commander of colored troops for eighteen years, said at the beginning of the war, "I do not hesitate to make the assumption that if properly trained and instructed, the negro will make as good soldiers as the world has ever seen". In 1918 the southern white papers

<sup>1</sup> Outlook, Oct. 29, '19.

were unstinted in their praise of negro troops. The Atlantic Constitution said, "In every war in which the United States has ever engaged, from the Revolution down to the present time, the negro has played a part and played it well. The colored race has every reason to feel pride in the past deeds of bravery and heroism of its members on the battle fields; and judging from all reports the negro troops now in France are measuring fully up to American standards".<sup>1</sup> A writer in the Vigilants, discussing the war as a great educator in revealing the character of men, pays tribute to the black race of American birth. He says, "There is a personage nearer home that we must be prepared to lose, Mistah Johnson, the Darktown Coon. He is no more. Gradually there has appeared in his place a stern young American, trained and alert, musket in hand. There is no hyphen to his name. His forefathers were Africans, but he is loyal United States".<sup>2</sup> Dr. Moton, the respected leader of the race, speaking before the National Negro Business League, in discussing the negro soldier and the war said, "I have absolutely no apology to offer for anything that I said or did

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<sup>1</sup> Outlook, Oct. 29, 1919.

<sup>2</sup> Negro Year Book, p. 85.

while I was in France at the request of President Wilson to get facts concerning negro soldiers to stop ugly rumors if they were not true. I got the facts. I stopped the rumors. No one in America, white or black, needs to be ashamed of our negro soldiers, neither as to their valor, their courage, or their morality".<sup>1</sup> The faith in the colored race and their capacity for citizenship is clearly shown by President Wilson's appointment of Mr. E. S. Scott, Secretary of Tuskegee Institute as special assistant to Secretary of War during the war. This one act was a wonderful incentive to the aspirations of the race.

During the war over one half million negroes left the South and migrated to the North. The situation caused by this migration, caused whites and negroes to get together to discuss the situation and to find out the causes of migration and to suggest remedies for stopping it. In every part of the South meetings of whites and colored were held. In this way there came to be better understanding between the races, a better knowledge of what each was thinking respecting the other, and as a result, there was an increased co-operation between whites and negroes in the

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<sup>1</sup>. Outlook, Oct. 29, 1919.

South. The main causes of this migration were found to be economic influences and racial friction in the South and labor demands in the North. The immediate economic causes of the migration were: The labor depression in the South and the accompanying cotton price demoralization which came as a result of the World War. The ravages of the cotton boll weevil in 1916 and the 1917 threat. The unusual floods over large sections of the South, which in conjunction with the boll weevil, demoralized farming conditions. The low wages always obtained in the South. The increased cost of living with an accompanying tendency to decrease rather than increase wages, and the great shortage of labor in the North. From the standpoint of the migrants themselves, the chief social causes were: Failure of the law to give physical protection and thus prevent lynchings; the treatment accorded negroes in the courts, such as imposing heavy fines from trivial causes and misdemeanors; the mistreatment of negroes by officers of the law; the lack of legal protection and legal redress against insults to negro women; the "Jim Crow Car" compelling all classes of negroes to ride in one compartment of a railroad coach, and denying to them the privilege of dining and sleeping cars; the disfranchisement

laws; the generally neglected conditions of the negro sections of towns; the lack of adequate school facilities, even the most rudimentary, for themselves and children, and the insulting attitude and treatment accorded negro patrons in many stores. Higher wages in the North and the opportunities for improvement of working conditions and social life were the immediate causes of the migration.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that this movement resulted in better financial conditions for the negroes. The negro grew prosperous during the war, and with this prosperity he became more and more an economic rival of the white man laboring within the same industrial field. With this prosperity has come a natural and wholesome desire for increases social and political independence. The high prices paid for all kinds of labor during the war gave the negroes, skilled and unskilled, an opportunity to enter industries and sections of the country into which they had never penetrated, before. Likewise, the same influence was working in the South. The high prices paid for cotton during the war taught many negroes a way out of agricultural peonage to which in many

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<sup>1</sup> Negro Year Book, p. 16.

sections of the South they had been subjected. With this opportunity for independence of action came a natural revolution against enforced servility to which the bulk of the negro race had been subjected.

The same transition was taking place among the negro soldiers. Military service had increased the self-confidence of the soldiers, and awakened the desire to see the self-confidence developed in the service of the nation, to be acknowledged by the nation. With the growth of self-confidence has developed self-assertiveness and obstrusiveness. This result was inevitable, due to the social situation found in America when the negro troops returned from France. The very impulse toward better social conditions among negroes had aroused, on the part of the whites who were on the same economic plane as the negro, passionate and primitive resentment.

The immediate result of the contact of a colored people with a new sense of self-confidence and self-assertiveness with a white people of bitter resentment toward the negroes' increasing prosperity and development, could only result in crises. This is exactly what happened. The year 1917 is marked as a year of riots and mob actions. The first out-

break of importance was the race riots of East St. Louis, Illinois. The general causes of these riots were the importation of negro laborers from the South; objections of labor unions to this importation and also the use of negroes as "strike breakers". This serious situation was supplanted by very bad civic and political conditions. In July there was a riot in Chester, Pennsylvania. This was caused by bad political conditions and inflamed sentiments against negroes. The riots of Philadelphia were caused by a negro woman buying and moving into a house on a white street. This aroused race feeling and resulted in mob action. The Houston riots grew out of friction between the city police and negro soldiers. Again in 1919 a series of riots spread over the United States. The first outbreak was at Washington followed by Chicago, Knoxville and Omaha. The fundamental cause of these riots was race antagonism stirred up by the returning soldiers, both black and white, and the bitterness aroused by the economic competition in the industrial field.

It was in this social situation that the returned negro soldier found himself. His reaction to the war in general and to this condition in particular is strong and decided. It is the negro's nature to react strongly to such influence.

A new era and a new negro are the result.

"And how can man die better

Than facing fearful odds

For the ashes of his fathers

And the temples of his Gods?"

The Crisis, Sept.

Part III.

The past five years in the life of American negroes have opened up their world of that probably more than the preceding fifty years. The negro race is not a child group any more. A study of the negro leadership shows a wonderful development. The negroes as a race respect and honor their leaders who speak out fearlessly and constructively thru the negro press, platform and pulpit. The colored people no longer depend upon the white world for their opinions, but are going to their own papers in these days for the news and for their guidance in thinking. These papers are coming to them from a score of Northern cities; they are coming to them from the great border cities; and they are coming to them from every Southern city. Wherever in all United States there is considerable negro population, there is a negro newspaper. To these papers may be added the publications of churches, societies, and schools. And all classes of these contain articles on racial strife, outcries against wrongs and persecutions. They not only condemn all forms of social injustice practiced by white people, but also condemn all forms of narrowness and bitterness which are found in their own race. As for the prosperity of these periodicals, there is abundant evidence. As for their in-

fluence, the evidence is no less. The negro seems to have newly discovered his fourth estate, to have realized the extraordinary power of his press. Today his newspaper is the voice of the negro. "Into every town and village of the land, and into many a log cabin in the mountains, come the colored papers, from all parts of the country, and these papers are read, and passed from hand to hand, and reread until they are worn out", says Robert T. Kerlin in his Voice of the Negro. What do these papers contain? What kind of instruction do they give their readers? What do they say about the race problem, the riots, the lynchings and the civic discriminations practiced on the negro?

Mr. R. T. Kerlin, professor of English in Virginia Military Institute, made a scientific study of the negro press in order to find the negro's version of the great problems that face American negroes. Mr. Kerlin studied over half a hundred of the ablest, most prosperous, most independent and most representative of the colored papers and magazines. From the results obtained from this study he has published a book on The Voice of the Negro, composed of clippings from the various papers on all the important problems of today. I shall use these clippings

in many cases to show the negro's reaction to the World War, to riots, lynchings, and social and civic discriminations.

The negro press was never more militant nor more wide awake than it is today. It is the people's natural spokesman and its voice rings true. "Fifteen years ago", states the Negro Associated Press, "it was the exceptional home that received its race newspaper each week; five years ago it was the average home; today the average home received not only one race periodical, but usually two or more, and the exceptional home, office, store, the schools and churches and libraries receive from six to more than a score. This is progress; this is success. But we have a long way to go. True, in thousands of instances, the remotest cabins in the distant hills receive their newspapers now, and the occupants read them religiously. Thru the magnificent advantage of the Associated Negro Press, all important happenings of the race are known regularly in every section of the nation, and by all classes. But there are yet thousands of homes into which our papers must go; there are millions of dollars spent with firms that should be induced to advertise in our periodicals, in a spirit of reciprocity, and to enable pub-

lishers to meet the heavy expense of adequate publicity, as do the daily newspapers."<sup>1</sup>

"In these crucial days of the acid test, every reader of every newspaper should make himself, or herself, and untiring agent and committee of one, to see that these needs are brought to pass. We have the enemies of justice on the run, and steady fire will bring their Waterloo. Onward!"<sup>2</sup>

The negro press is very bitter in its comments on the white press. The Wichita Protest, October 31, 1919, states: "Every newspaper editor of our group in this country knows that the Associated Press, the leading news distributing service of the country, has carried on a policy of discrimination in favor of the whites and against the blacks, and is doing it daily now".

The white editor positively ignores the opinion of the black man as expressed thru the negro journal. Year in and year out, you may read the white journals and you will get nothing that reflects the real psychology of the black man. "In the press of America", says the Oklahoma City Black Dis-

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<sup>1</sup>•Associated Negro Press.

<sup>2</sup>•Kerlin: Voice of Negro, pp. 1-21.

patch, "all that the negro gets is headlines for his faults, 'Big Black Brute Does This' and 'Huge Black Negro Fiend Does That'. The slightest offense or infraction of the law is sufficient to put the black man on the front page. The Negro's real heart and virtue rarely ever is exposed in America."<sup>1</sup>

The negro press has been very bitter in its denunciation of the white press in their attitude on the riots. In the first place, many of the riots have actually been invited by the sensational headlines featuring alleged crimes by negroes, and in the case of the Omaha riot, the colored press has declared again and again that responsibility for it must be placed on the white press of that city. For it was the large number of white Southerners working on the city papers, who distorted facts and pictured the negro of such a type that inflamed the minds of the people and resulted in the riot.

There was a strong complaint after the East St. Louis and Philadelphia riots that when the riots occurred, the police made it their special business to disarm negroes and thus place them at a disadvantage so that they were

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<sup>1</sup> Oklahoma City Black Dispatch.

not able to protect themselves. Still another complaint made by the negroes was that in all cases of persons tried by the courts charged with being implicated in the riots, more severe punishments were imposed upon negroes than upon the whites.

We know that the negro reacted differently to the riots of 1919 than of those of 1917. Of course the change of attitude due to the war, and the increasing prosperity of the negro had their effects, but one must understand the teachings of the negro press to understand the negro's new attitude. For the first time in American history, the negro did not run, rather he stood his ground and fought as a man fights to protect life and home. Mr. Russell says, "The negro did not run in Chicago nor in Washington, and in my judgment he is not going to run anywhere, and the reason is that he has found himself. He knows now that he is a man. That makes the difference".

Reverend Willian A. Byrd of Cleveland says in the Gazette, "Colored men are simply defending their lives and homes. We say to them, continue defending them until the last man falls and then let the women take up the fight".

Of more radical nature is the following clipping

from the Challenge magazine of New York, October.

"Negroes, Unite! Brutal oppression is sweeping over us like storm-swept tidal waves. There will be no mercy shown us because we are black, standing on the highways of the world, pleading for mercy. We are ignored by the President and lawmakers. When we ask for a full man's share, they cry 'insolent'. When we shoot down the mobist that would burn our properties and destroy our lives, they shout 'Bolshevist'. When a white man comes to our side armed with the sword of righteousness and square dealing, they howl 'nigger-lover and bastard'. If we take our grievances to Congress, they are pigeon-holed, turned over to moth. We are abandoned, cast off, maligned, shackled, shoved down the hills toward Golgatha in 'The Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave'. Every day we are told to keep quiet. Only a fool will keep quiet if he is being robbed of his birthright. Only a coward will lie down and whine under the lash if he, too, can give back the lash.

There is little pity from the strong for the one that is weak. There is no altruistic religion in the soul of the strong for dispensation among the weak. The only pity obtained is that obtained by superior strength.

America hates, lynches, enslaves us not because we are black, but because we are weak. A strong, united negro race will not be mistreated any more than a strong Japanese race. It is always strength over weakness, might over right.

But with education comes thot, with thot comes action; with action comes freedom. Read! Read! Read! Then when the mob comes, whether with torch or with gun, let us stand and give battle".<sup>1</sup>

The following editorials will more adequately represent the present attitude of the colored press on the question of resistance to mob assaults: "For three centuries we have suffered and cowered. No race ever gave passive resistance and submission to evil longer, more piteous trial. Today we raise the terrible weapon of Self-defense. When the murderer comes, he shall no longer strike us in the back. When the armed lynchers gather, we, too, must gather armed. When the mob moves, we propose to meet it with bricks and clubs and guns. If the United States is to be a Land of Law, we would live humbly and peaceably in it; working, singing, learning and dreaming to make it and ourselves nobler and better; if it is to be a Land of Mobs and Lynchers, we

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<sup>1</sup>•Kerlin: Voice of the Negro, p. 20.

might as well die today as tomorrow.

"If there are to be riots in the future, I want to say to my people, let it be as it has been in the past, that you shall not be the instigators of them. It is to be the everlasting disgrace of these Northern cities, as it has been of certain Southern cities, that these riots have been started by whites, and that white policemen, who should be the first to uphold the law, have, in nearly every instance, assisted the mobs. Now is the time for all of us to keep our wits; to do nothing wrong which may be any excuse for riots. Let men and women go about their work quietly, attending to their business. Keep away from saloons, and places where there is gambling. Avoid arguments. Make no boasts. Make no threats. Attack no man or woman without due provocation, and under no circumstances, hurt a child. Don't tell anybody what the negroes are going to do to the whites, for we do not want war; we want peace. Our safety is in peace. Don't loaf in the streets; do not needlessly encounter gangs of white boys. Don't carry concealed weapons, it's against the law.

Now I'm not urging cowardice. I am urging caution. I am urging common sense. I am urging law and order.

Protect your home, protect your wife and children, with your life if necessary. Obey the law, but do not hunt trouble. Avoid it. Do not be afraid or lose heart because of the riots. They are merely symptoms of the protest of your entrance into a higher sphere of American citizenship. They are the dark hours before morning, which have always come just before the burst of a new civic light. Things will be better for the negro. We want full citizenship ballot, equal school facilities and everything else. We fought for them. We must have them. We must not yield. The greater part of the best thinking white people, North and South, know we are entitled to all we ask. In their hearts, they are for us, tho they may fear the lower element who are trying to stir up trouble to keep us from getting our rights. But they will fail just as they failed to keep us from getting our freedom. God is with us. They cannot defeat God." These are the words of R. R. Wright, Jr. the editor of the Christian Recorder of Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup>

"Self-defense is applauded and advocated, I believe, by the entire colored press, with one exception. This

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<sup>1</sup>•Kerlin: Voice of Negro, p.22.

This fact of practical unanimity in recommending self-defense where assailed is perfectly consistent with a general temperateness of tone, a temperateness that lacks nothing of resoluteness of purpose", says Mr. Kerlin.<sup>1</sup>

On June 15, 1918, Dr. R. R. Moton wrote President Wilson saying: "There is more genuine restlessness and perhaps dissatisfaction on the part of the colored people than I have ever before known. It seems to me something ought to be done to change the attitude of these millions of black people; this attitude, which is anything but satisfactory, not to use a stronger word, is due very largely to recent lynchings and burnings of colored people. The negro press has protested against lynchings for years with little beneficial results, but today a new note is added. The negro race is beginning to organize Law and Order Leagues, the object of which is the development of a sound public sentiment that will lead to prompt and certain enforcement of existing laws for the prevention and punishment of crime, to aid in the preparation and enactment of whatever new laws may be necessary for securing early and effective punishment of crime and the maintenance of law and order."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Voice of Negro, p. 23.

2. Negro Year Book, 1918-19, p. 74.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored people carried on an especially active propaganda against lynchings. This was done by having investigations made of particular lynchings, publishing the results of these investigations, and by sending communications and open letters to the governors of the states where lynchings occurred, asking what steps had been taken to apprehend the lynchers. In each of these open letters, it would be stated how many lynchings had occurred in that particular state, etc. These investigations and open letters received wide publicity thru the country.

The negro is demanding that the government take some stand on the lynching question, and has suggested a commission made up of both races to get together and formulate plans for effective control of this evil. The 1918 lynching record shows how serious this crime has become. There were sixty-eight lynchings in 1918, an increase of twenty-six over 1917. Of those lynched, sixty were negroes, five of whom were women. Sixteen, or one-fourth of those put to death were charged with rape or attempted rape. When negroes in the South protest against mob violence and lynchings, the Southern press and Southern statesmen befuddle the

issue by proclaiming that if negroes would stop the one un-mentionable crime, lynching would stop, and they excuse lynching and dismiss the subject. As a matter of fact, only one-fourth of the lynchings that occur in the whole country are caused by assaults upon women. The Atlanta negroes have petitioned Congress, governor and legislatures to put down lynchings, and the Colored Welfare League that lynching be made a federal crime.

The negro press points out as false the charge that the negro shields criminals, and it demands that the law abiding element of negro race should not be held responsible for crimes of the lawless element. Dr. H. R. Butler of Atlanta says in an open letter to the governor of the state, "We do not deny that there is a criminal class among our people; but we do say because we know, that this class is as far removed from the better class of negroes as the Jews were from the Gentiles. And we declare, for we know, that the better element of the race labor harder thru their churches and their humble schools to reduce this criminal element than their white friends." The editor of the Negro Year Book, Dr. Work, states that, "The idea back of the contention that the respectable negroes should ferret out the criminals of the race is that the entire

negro race is held responsible for what particular individuals of the race do. The entire white race is not so held. There is also the failure at all times to recognize that there are classes among negroes, that the respectable ones do not come in touch with the criminal element of the race and that the criminal element does not seek the protection of the respectable negroes. It should not be demanded that the respectable element of a people, either white or black, should exercise functions which the state as such has delegated to the police department.

There has been a remarkable change in the negro's political attitude. Before the war, as has been shown, very few negroes were vitally interested in politics. But during the war, the changing conditions stimulated the negro's dormant desires for political power, and the result has been a keener interest in governmental affairs, both national and local. Negro leaders and the negro press as a whole urged all the eligible negroes to register and vote, for they said, "Constitutional amendments guaranteeing the ballot to the negro, and giving Congress power to enforce it in the states, have not been abridged or repealed, and negro people themselves must unite to defeat and destroy forever technical-

ities and circumventions which contravene our citizenship rights. The ballot is the only effective weapon of citizenship".<sup>1</sup> The negroes followed the advice given by their papers and registered. In the South and West, the whites tried to keep the negroes from the polls by threats, but the negro could not be frightened. He was a different negro from the one of reconstruction times. His changed attitude is well shown by this incident. An old colored lady standing on the street corner of one of the Southern cities, the night before the recent election watched a long line of ghostly figures as they slowly paraded the streets. When the leader of the organization was directly in front of her, she pointed her bony finger at him and cried, "Ah, Ah, white man, you don't need think we'ze gonna be scared at old white rags any more, not after what we'ze done to them Germans". And she voiced the opinion of her race, for no longer will the white South be able to keep the negro from the polls thru means of threats and intimidations.

Perhaps of more importance is the influence of Dr. Du Bois. Dr. Du Bois just completed a tour of the country, during which he organized the negroes of every community into

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<sup>1</sup>. Negro Year Book, p. 72.

local chapters of the National Branch for advancement of colored people. These local chapters are to demand local civic rights. He believes that in this way the colored and white people will cooperate for the best interests of all. Du Bois does not preach force only as a last extreme. He says the right to vote was a heritage of the negro from West Africa, and the negro of today must have that primary power. If the whites will cooperate and give the negro this fundamental right, all will be well; if not, then he says, "The Dark World is going to submit to its present treatment just as long as it must and not one moment longer."<sup>1</sup>

Another change, as important as that of the growth of the press, has been the growth of international race-consciousness on the part of the black man. The World War caused the outlook of every people to be greatly widened and the racial consciousness among negroes to be considered in world terms. Speaking along this line, the Amsterdam News, a New York City Negro paper, stated that, "There must be no North, no South, nor other sectionalism with us. the race must learn to think in world terms. The colored

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<sup>1</sup> Du Bois: Darkwater, p. 49.

Northerner and colored Southerner, the colored West Indian, South American and African must learn to think together as one race; one family; since it is absolutely imperative if they would come into their own that they act together, There must be no foolish sectionalism among us. The white can afford the asinine pleasure. We cannot! In our fight for existence and a place in the sun, we need no only to cooperate among ourselves, but to look abroad for allies. Our allies must be found among those whom the white man also oppresses because of their black or yellow skin.

There must be no sectionalism and no looking backward into the past, but a constructive, far-sighted policy for the future. We, like the Anglo-Saxon and other races, must forget that we were ever slaves. We, like other races, must demand and fight for a place in the sun.

We must learn to think in terms of world policy and to act in harmonious unity".<sup>1</sup>

There is no definitely accurate estimate made of the total number of black men used in the World War. It is probable, however, when the number used by the United States, Belgium, France, Great Britian and Germany is considered and

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<sup>1</sup>.Amsterdam News, New. York Paper. Kerlin, The Voice of Negro.

also the fact that these black men were used as combat troops and as labor battalions on all fronts in France, at Saloniki, at the Dardenelles, in Palestine, in Egypt, in the Kameriens, in Togoland, in German Southwest Africa and in German East Africa, that over two million soldiers of African descent were used. Their fighting in the trenches and their work behind the lines contributed in no small measure to the success of the Allies.

Few people, even yet, have any just idea of the vast melting pot of races which was to be found behind the allied front. The whole idea represented a remarkable development, but perhaps the most interesting and important outcome of it all is to be the effect that the return of these men will have upon their people. We have no idea of the final effects, but the immediate results are striking and full of significance. In both the colonies of the French and English in Africa has there been serious problems arising from the demands made by the returned soldiers.

At last Africa is awakening from her long sleep. There are obvious signs that the continent is not as peaceful as it was, and that the natives are not content. The war made all African problems more pressing, it had a distinctly en-

lightening effect upon the natives, while at the same time it showed England and France that with the growing race consciousness was developing a desire for help from the government in education, medical attention, etc., and a failure to meet these legitimate aspirations will lead sooner or later to serious trouble.<sup>1</sup>

In 1918 while the nations of the world were deliberating about the League of Nations, the Pan-African Convention met at Paris to discuss the problems facing the black world. Negroes from forty-seven divisions of the race met in this convention and discussed plans for race union. Demands were sent the League of Nations, and protests were made against the use of Africa for the Europeans. This is of little importance to the paper, except to show the power of organization, and the influence of this movement upon Black America. Some of the most prominent leaders in the convention were the leaders of different negro groups in America.

On August 20, 1920, Marcus Garvey, a new leader of negro thot, launched a world movement for the unification of political and economic enterprises of all negroes everywhere. Over three thousand elected delegates from all parts

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<sup>1</sup> Outlook, Nov. 20, 1920.

of the world attended this meeting in New York. This organization as founded, is known as the United Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League of the World. With its subsidiary bodies incorporated as the Black Star Line and the Negro Factories League, embracing a world wide commercial and industrial development project, the establishment of an independent and recognized mother country in Africa and the achievement, thru those means, of true negro freedom.<sup>1</sup>

In the opening speech of the convention, Garvey said, "We met here for the purpose of enlightening the world respecting the attitude of the New Negro. We declare what is good for the white man is also good for the negro. The white race claim freedom, they drenched Europe in blood for four and one half years. We were called upon, we fought as men, but after battles were won, we were still deprived of liberty. Now we shall organize four hundred million strong for freedom".<sup>2</sup>

Garveyism is opposed by the schools of Du Bois, Moton and the Clergy. R. R. Moton, the president of the National Business League, and representative of the Washington ideal

<sup>1</sup> World Work, Jan. '21, Talley: The Negro Moses.

<sup>2</sup> World Work, Jan. '21, M. Garvey.

of gradual negro advancement, thru work, education and adaptation to the whites, oppose Garvey's radical demand for immediate and complete economic independence and social and political equality. Du Bois, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, holds that the interests of the negro race can best be promoted by a more equal business and political association with the whites as opposed to the complete separation and independence of Garvey.

The clergy is very bitter in its opposition to Garvey and his place. Their opposition was aroused chiefly because Garvey attacked the white God of Christianity and tried to destroy the negro's faith in white religion. Garvey's significance lies in the fact that he embodies and directs a new spirit of independence among negroes. Whatever happens to his schemes, they are worth studying because of the spirit that prompted them. In August, 1920, he had enrolled over four million members in his organization. This is an important fact when we consider that neither Washington nor Du Bois, during long years of effort, were able to enroll more than eight hundred thousand in all their organizations.

"Loose him!" This man on whom you plod,  
Beneath your heel hate, iron-shod;  
His silent sorrow troubles God--

"Let him go!"

There will be plagues, wars will not cease,  
There cannot be a lasting peace  
Until this being you release--

"Let him go!"

Each doomful kingdom, throne and crown  
Built on the lowly fettered down,  
Shall perish, lo, the Heavens frown--

"Let him go!"

Naught but a name is Liberty,  
Naught but a name Democracy,  
Till love has made each mortal free--

"Let him go!"

"Loose him!" He has his part to play  
In Life's Great Drama, day by day,  
He has his mission, God's own way,--

"Let him go!"

"Loose him!" 'Twill be your master role,  
'Twill be your triumph and your goal;  
'Twill be the saving of your soul--

"Let him go!"

L. B. Watkins, (Richmond Planet)(Col).

Part IV

For person who can see no reason for the colored man's unrest and dissatisfaction is either a mental misfit or totally unacquainted with human psychology. The black man fought to make the world safe for democracy, and returning from the war, he now demands that America be made and maintained safe for black Americans.

When he returned from France, he found that America was still lynching his people. Had lynched his race on an average of two negroes a week for fifty years. His people were still being disfranchised. Yet disfranchisement is the deliberate theft and robbery of the only protection of poor against rich and black against white. It encouraged ignorance. It has never really tried to educate the negro. A dominant minority has never wanted the negro educated. The Southern states accepted the school system as imposed upon them by the result of the Civil War. It has been a blessing to both races but it is a fact undeniable that it has been adopted and administered mainly in the interests of the white people, who had, to begin with, more intelligence and practically all the wealth, and only meagerly and begrudgingly in the interests of the negro, who needed it most.

Louisiana affords instructive figures to prove this

point. The population in 1910 was 941,125 whites and 713,-874 colored. The average length of session of the white elementary schools was 7.64 months; of the colored 4.6. The white teachers received \$2,404,603 and the colored \$202,231. There were 5,000 white teachers employed and 1,285 colored. While the white male teachers received an average salary of \$75 a month, the colored teachers received \$34.25. The value of school property for the whites is \$7,539,145 and for the colored \$266,281. Is this a square deal?

He found his people were discriminated against in all economic lines. Industry was organized against them, wages were lowered. and rents raised.

He returned to a country that he felt was insulting his people. "It has," says Du Bois, "organized a nation-wide and latterly a world-wide propanganda of deliberate and continuous insult and defamation of black blood where ever found. It decrees that it shall not be possible to travel nor reside, work nor play, education nor instruction for the black man to exist without tacit, or open acknowledgment of his inferiority to the lowest white. And it looks upon any attempt to question or even discuss this

dogma as arrogance, unwarranted assumption and treason".<sup>1</sup>

The negro resents these conditions and has reasons for doing so. The returned soldier, as a whole, however, is contented with simple justice. He feels himself a man like other men, and naturally he feels that if his country saw fit to compel him to fight for it, that country, in turn ought to at least be grateful and give him a man's chance in the race for life. The negroes have in general adopted fourteen specific articles as basis of democracy. These articles include the things the negro wants and expected as a result of the war. The negro wants the right to vote and the privilege of exercising that right in casting his ballot, because he knows this to be one of the fundamental rights of the citizens of a republic; and that any set of people who are denied the privilege of exercising this right will be rendered powerless in helping to shape civil affairs in the community, state or country to which they are a part. Let the South be fair and apply the standard of elective franchise to white and colored alike, and the first step will be taken toward removing the negro's feeling of mistrust.

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<sup>1</sup>. Crisis, May, 1919.

The negroes demand better educational facilities in the South. He wants this because he recognizes education as the lever by which a people are lifted up. He is capable of receiving it, is anxious for it, and needs it to help him to be a better citizen. He meets every requirement in the way of taxation for the establishment and maintenance of all classes of institutions. To give to the white youths the privileges and advantages of these institutions and deny them to colored youth, naturally make the negro dissatisfied. When the South provides the same class of technical, high school, college, university, and too, military training out of state funds for colored youth, as is done for the whites, then another barrier to their progress and a mutual feeling of helpfulness will be removed.

The negro demands the abolition of the so called "Jim Crow Car" system. Nothing has served to estrange the races in the South and create feeling of bitterness so much as the "Jim Crow Cars". Even tho the statutes of the Southern states call for separate but equal accomodation for white and colored passengers; there is not a road in the South that lives up to the law. No difference whatever is made in the price of the tickets, but all kinds of unjust and

unfair differences are made as to accommodations and treatment. Negro passengers are often subjected to degrading and humiliating treatment. The privileges of sleeping cars and dining cars are thrown open to white passengers, but persistently denied to colored passengers. Under the system of first and second class fares, a better distinction could be made and less friction and bad feeling engendered.

The negro demands the discontinuance of unjust discriminating regulations and segregation in the various departments of government. In a country like ours, a premium should be placed on efficiency and faithfulness to duty. This is not the case with the negro. They are subjected to humiliating conditions and discriminations; denied the benefits of promotion in line of efficient service. They have been refused assignment to work even after passing the required civil service examination, certified to and sent on for appointment with the highest rating on the eligible list. The negroes demand the same military training for colored youths as for white. They demand the removal of an imaginary dead line in the recognition of fitness for promotion in military and naval service. It is not fair to the spirit of valor and patriotism to refuse or withhold

promotions to higher ranks from colored soldiers who have shown their valor on battle fields, stood every test and proven their ability to train, lead and command others, by a strict adherence to the rule of obedience and faithfulness to duty.

They demand the removal of the peonage system in the South. In certain sections of the South, colored people are subjected to labor conditions very little removed from slavery. Advantage is taken of their ignorance and hardships are imposed to the point of suffering. They are in most cases powerless to prevent such or to defend themselves against it; and they feel their only deliverance is to leave the South. The recent disclosures of this condition, as it existed on the Williams plantation will no doubt strengthen this demand.

The race demands that the negro be given an equal economic opportunity. They ask that an economic wage scale be applied to whites and colored alike. The negro's record as a good workman is generally conceded. He is willing and anxious to engage in all kinds of labor, both skilled and unskilled. But there is too much difference made in the scale of wages, applied to colored persons as compared with

the wages paid to white persons performing the same class of work. The cost of living is just as high for one as for the other, and a proper recognition of this fact will go a long way in helping to dignify labor and an economic wage with no color line.

The negro demands better housing conditions for colored employees in industrial plants. One of the things that contribute to the spirit of restlessness and dissatisfaction among negroes, is the utter disregard of the necessity of encouraging better home life for the laboring class. The people want homes provided with some degree of comfort, convenience and beauty. They demand better sanitary conditions in the colored sections of our cities and towns. It is common knowledge that the municipal authorities pay little attention to proper sanitary facilities in the sections of towns where the negroes live. This fosters troubles and public nuisances.

They demand reforms in the penal institutions of the South. They do not condone crime nor ask that it be winked at or excused, but they do expect a fair and impartial administration of the law. In too many cases, young colored boys and girls whose first offense is some petty misde-

meanor are sent to prison for long terms and placed with hardened criminals under such conditions that it is hard for them to reform. While for like offenses, white youths are placed in well regulated reformatories. Treatment for both should be the same both from a human standpoint and as a matter of justice.

The negroes demand a fair and impartial trial by jury instead of lynching. No people are safe in a community where mob violence is tolerated. Violators of law should be punished, but by due process of law. The lynching spirit is so strong in some sections that it borders on a disregard for all law, order and decency. Innocent people are often the victims of the mob; and the peace and well being of the entire community is seriously affected thereby. In relation to the former, they want the recognition of the negro's right and fitness to sit on juries. The jury system is one of the fundamental principles of our government and the privilege of exercising this right should be extended to capable citizens without regard to race relationship.

In conclusion he wants fair play. Just as the negro

has been among the first to give his best to his country in every struggle for the defense of the flag, so he wants and expects equal opportunity to serve in the development of his country and the full enjoyment of the fruits thereof. This he regards as a proper, liberal and reasonable interpretation of what is guaranteed to him by the constitution under which he lives and to uphold which he sacredly dedicates his all.<sup>1</sup>

Thus we see that the negro's grievance is, that the discriminations made against him are more and more unbearable the better public citizen he is or tries to be; that they are impediments, as Governor Cable says, "Not to the grovelings of his lower nature, but to the aspirations of his higher; that as long as he is content to travel and lodge as a ragamuffin, frequent the vilest places of amusement, laze about the streets, shun the public library and the best churches and colleges, and neglect every duty of his citizenship, no white man could be much freer than he finds himself; but that the farther he rises above such life as this the more he is galled and tormented with ignominious discriminations made against him as a public citizen,

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<sup>1</sup> Report made by Sec. of Fin. Dept. of M. E. Church. 1918.N.Y.

both by custom and by law; and finally that as to his mother, his wife, his sister, his daughter, these encouragements to ignoble, and discouragements to nobler life are only crueler in their case than in his own".<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps of all the protests made none are so bitter as that of the treatment of colored womanhood by white manhood. For the negro race realizes that the progress of the race depends upon the negro woman and her ability to create home life for her race. Thus the negro press is demanding laws that will protect colored womanhood, and this also accounts for the formation of the Secret Fraternal Order, a new organ that has as its purpose the preventing of any improper 'social equality' between whites and blacks. However, there is a certain attitude of the race so generally prevalent that it should challenge national attention in these days of widespread estrangement of classes and groups. There is, everywhere, a willingness of the race to cooperate with other Americans for the purpose of a better understanding between blacks and whites. They are taking the initiative and asking for conferences that will enable the races to

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<sup>1</sup>. C. W. Cable, The Negro.

know each other better. The race leaders and organizations counsel respect for law, loyalty to the government, and plead for official co-operation in allaying the race friction. Extending the hand of brotherhood always, putting forth the arm of defense only when attacked, they are everywhere, North, South, East and West, urging get-together meetings, careful study of conditions, remedies for friction. This attitude of Black America is one of the most significant features of national life today. Is it not significant that the most proscribed and assailed group of America is the most insistent for opportunity to cooperate with other Americans for America's good? The race is ready to state its program, to suggest what it can do, and learn what it is desired to do as its part in allaying strife and bringing about the realization of true American ideals. This outspoken desire to treat, to reach an understanding, should be met by the government, by authorities of state and city. The plea of the world is for co-operation to displace antagonism. Is it not saying too much to assert that America's future depends upon the success with which she can obtain the co-operation of the various classes and groups of the nation? Shall not this

spirit of co-operation evinced by the negro be encouraged? Shall it not be met by White America?<sup>1</sup>

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Conclusion.

If America is to meet the challenge of the modern age, it must face its great peculiar problem of relation to the negro race. How serious and pressing that problem is, no thoughtful man, white or black, need be told. We need the clarifying, calming and steadying power of great principles; we need the reverence for person as such, absolutely unaffected by color or race connection. Nothing short of this will solve the problem.

"The white man must secure to the negro equality of opportunity and rights, nothing less will appease the black man's anger. Nothing less can possibly satisfy the white man's self-respect."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>.New Age. Setp., 1912.

<sup>2</sup>.Franklin H. Giddings, Indep. Aug. 2, 1919, p. 156.

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